VICTIMS PROGRAMS
STATUS REPORT

2005/2006

Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security

Table of Contents

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS 3

VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT 4

HISTORY 4

VICTIMS OF CRIME PROGRAMS COMMITTEE 5

COMMITTEE MEMBERS 5
COMMITTEE MEETINGS 5

FUNDING AGREEMENTS 6

GRANT FUNDING FORMULA 6
GRANTS PROVIDED 7
POLICE BASED PROGRAMS 7
COMMUNITY PROGRAMS 11

PROGRAM ACTIVITY 16

INTRODUCTION 16
NEW CASES 16
PERSONS ASSISTED 17
TYPE OF ASSISTANCE 17
VOLUNTEERS 18

ALBERTA SOLICITOR GENERAL INITIATIVES 20

VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT PROGRAM 20
REQUESTING RESTITUTION PROGRAM 23
VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR TRAINING 24
BROCHURES 24
QUARTERLY REPORT FORM 24
VICTIM ADVOCATE TRAINING MANUAL 24
VICTIMS OF CRIME WEBSITE 24
AWARENESS CAMPAIGN 25
GRANT REVIEW SURVEY 25

CONTACT US 26

APPENDIX A - MAP of ALBERTA POLICE-BASED VICTIM SERVICE UNITS 27

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Victims of Crime Fund grants totaling $3,638,625 were provided to 89 victim services programs in fiscal year 2005/2006. This is the largest annual grant amount allocated by Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security to date. Of this amount, $2,473,426 was dispersed to programs that applied for funding in the 2005/2006 fiscal year. The remaining $1,165,199 was provided to programs that received multi-year grants in previous years.

- Sixty-eight percent, or $2,458,473 of grant funds for 2005/2006 applicants were provided to police-based (RCMP, municipal police, and First Nations police) programs.

- Thirty-two percent, or $1,180,152 of grant funds were provided to community initiatives.

- As of March 31, 2006, Alberta's network of police-based victim service programs consisted of 74 programs operating 114 victim service units.

- Victim service programs reported assisting with 34,907 new cases of crime or tragedy. Over half involved assisting victims of violent crime.

- Programs reported providing services to 46,149 people in 2005/2006, of which 39,140 (85%) were adults and 7,009 (15%) were children under the age of 18.

- The type of assistance most frequently provided for new and ongoing cases was in the *providing information* category.

- Approximately 1,925 volunteer advocates and Board members contributed a total of 223,188 volunteer hours.

- Providing *general assistance* (information, crisis intervention and referrals), accounted for 44% of volunteers' time.

- Under new Victim Impact Statement Program procedures implemented in 2004/2005, 12,796 Victim Impact Statement packages were distributed to victims of crime by victim service programs. The majority were distributed in cases of common assault (31%), domestic assault (21%) and sexual assault (8%).

- A total of 5,400 Victim Impact Statement Notification Forms were forwarded to the Clerk of the Court and the Crown, by victim service programs, once charges had been laid.

- During the year, 1,233 Requests for Restitution were completed and of these, 1,185 were forwarded to the Crown to consider for use in their sentencing submission in Court. The majority (73%) of requests concerned non-violent crimes.

VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT

History

The *Victims' Programs Assistance Act,* proclaimed January 16, 1991, established the Victims Programs Assistance Fund and provided for the appointment of a Victims Programs Assistance Committee. The Committee was established to review grant applications for programs and services that benefit victims of crime and to make funding recommendations to the Solicitor General.

The *Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)* was proclaimed August 1, 1997 for all provisions of the *Act*, except those directly associated with the delivery of financial benefits to individual victims of crime. On November 1, 1997, the financial benefits section was proclaimed. The *Victims of Crime Act* replaced the *Victims' Programs Assistance Act* and *Criminal Injuries Compensation Act*, and established the authority to collect victim fine surcharges of 15% on provincial statute offences.

A Fund into which provincial and federal surcharges are collected and deposited was also established under the *Victims of Crime Act.* Section 10 of the *Act* provides for payments from the Fund. Expenditures include: grants approved by the Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security; costs incurred by the Victims of Crime Programs Committee; the Criminal Injuries Review Board; expenses to persons whose services are engaged by the Solicitor General and Public Security; and, financial benefits payable to victims of crime for injuries suffered. Salaries, benefits and other expenditures related to the administration of the *Act* are also paid from the Fund.

The *Act* includes principles respecting the treatment of victims and establishes entitlements for victims to obtain certain information.

On March 10, 2004, Bill 12 was introduced in the Alberta Legislature to amend the *Victims of Crime Act.* The *Act* was amended to enhance the principles for victims of crime by incorporating the Canadian Statement of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime. While the new principles reiterate the basic principles regarding courtesy, compassion, respect, privacy, financial benefits and minimized inconvenience, they also give victims a more meaningful role in the criminal justice system. The amended principles indicate that: the victims views and concerns are important; information should be provided regarding the victim's role and opportunities to participate in the criminal justice processes; and, clarifies the types of information victims are entitled to receive. The amendment came into effect on May 10, 2005.

Under the *Victims of Crime Act,* an Office of the Director was created. This Office operates within Public Security Division, under the Department of the Solicitor General and Public Security, and is responsible for the administration of the *Act.* Victims who feel they have not been treated in accordance with the principles of the *Act* can obtain information from this Office about how they can resolve their concerns.

History

Two core programs operate under the *Victims of Crime Act* - a financial benefits program for individual victims who have suffered injury as a result of a violent criminal offence, and a grants program that provides funding to groups and organizations offering information, assistance and support to victims during their involvement in the criminal justice process.

In 2005/06, $6,992,915 was provided to eligible victims of crime by the Victims of Crime Financial Benefits Program for physical or emotional injuries sustained as a result of violent crime committed in Alberta. The Victims of Crime Fund also provided $3,638,625 to Alberta police and community-based programs that provided services to victims of crime.

This status report focuses on the Victims of Crime Fund grants program. Key performance measures related to victims can be found in the Alberta Solicitor General Annual Report 2005-2006 at: www.victims.gov.ab.ca

VICTIMS OF CRIME PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

The Victims of Crime Act established the Victims of Crime Programs Committee, whose members are appointed by the Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security. The Committee evaluates applications for grants for programs and makes recommendations to the Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security on grant funding. The Minister has final approval of grants awarded.

Committee Members

The Committee consists of five members, with three members representing the community at-large, one member representing police, and one member representing government.

Members during 2005/06 were[1]:

Ms. Mona Jorgensen, (Chair), member-at-large, Bragg Creek, Alberta
Ms. Sonia Wilson, (Edmonton Police Service), representing police
Mr. Tom Blair, member-at-large, Granum, Alberta
Mr. Donald Clark, member-at-large, Edmonton, Alberta
Mr. Peter Teasdale, (Alberta Justice), representing government

Committee Meetings

Meetings are scheduled twice per year to evaluate grant applications submitted for the April 1st and October 1st application deadlines. The Committee met June 9th, 2005 and December 8th and 9th, 2005. In 2005/06, 59 grant applications were recommended for funding by the Committee and approved by the Minister.

[1] Mr. Richard Smedstad served as Chair for the December 2005 Committee meeting. Ms. Diane Wickenheiser and Ms. Shelley Ogilvie also served on the Committee at the June 2005 meeting.

FUNDING AGREEMENTS

Programs approved for funding are required to enter into agreements that outline terms and conditions to be met. In accordance with the agreement, funded programs are required to submit statistics quarterly, financial statements annually or upon request, and an evaluation report upon expiry of their funding term.

Grant Funding Formula

A grant funding formula helps to ensure that grant monies are allocated fairly and equitably throughout the province. The formula is used to calculate a base funding amount for eligible programs. The formula:

- Allocates a specified amount from the Victims of Crime Fund to police-based programs that provide basic services; and,
- Utilizes a per crime amount that has been calculated using violent crime statistics from Uniform Crime Report data submitted to Statistics Canada by all police services.

Police-based programs may receive additional funding if any of the following discretionary factors apply:

- large geographical area/low population density;
- unique demographics;
- weaker economic base;
- new programs/projects; and
- other special circumstances that may be identified by the applicant.

Specialized community programs/projects that benefit victims during the criminal justice process are also eligible for discretionary funding.

Eligible programs may request multi-year grant funding commitments, which allow them to budget for the future. To be considered eligible, an established program must have operated successfully for three consecutive years in partnership with Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security, met the conditions of previous funding agreements, and demonstrated sound management practices.

The minimum base funding awarded to police-based programs is $8,000 per program, per year. Community program grants have no minimum amount. Grants to both police-based and community programs have a maximum amount of $100,000.

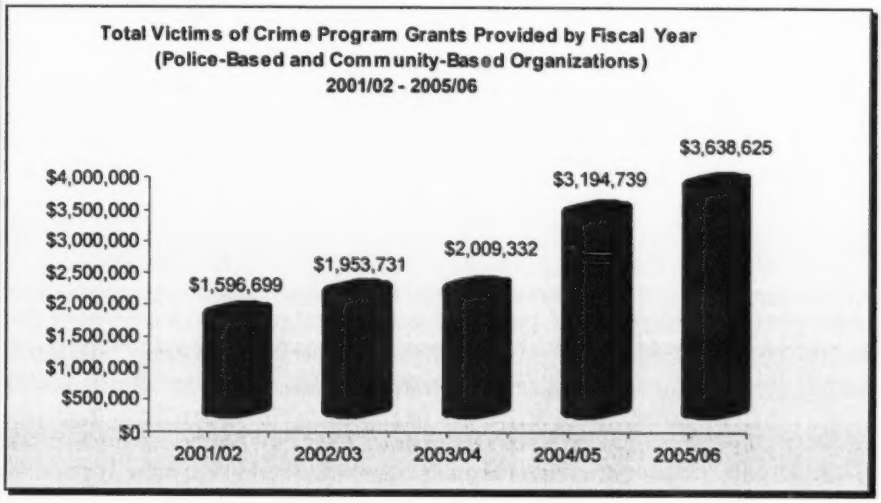
Grants Provided

The Report of the Alberta Victims of Crime Consultation was based on consultations with victims, service providers and stakeholders across Alberta. The Report, released in July 2004, established a ten year strategic direction for victims of crime programs and services, and made recommendations to ensure victims have a more meaningful role in the criminal justice system. One of the report's accepted recommendations, is to "increase funding for victims' programs and services."

In accordance with this recommendation, the Solicitor General approved an increase in grant funding of $400,000, from $3.6 million to $4 million, which became effective April 2005.

In 2005/06, the Solicitor General approved grant funding totaling $3,638,625, which was dispersed to 89 programs. This amount is the highest dollar amount awarded for grants in the history of the program and represents a 14% increase from 2004/05 (*Figure 1*). The $3,638,625 amount also includes grant recipients from previous years that received multi-year funding.

Figure 1



Police –based Programs

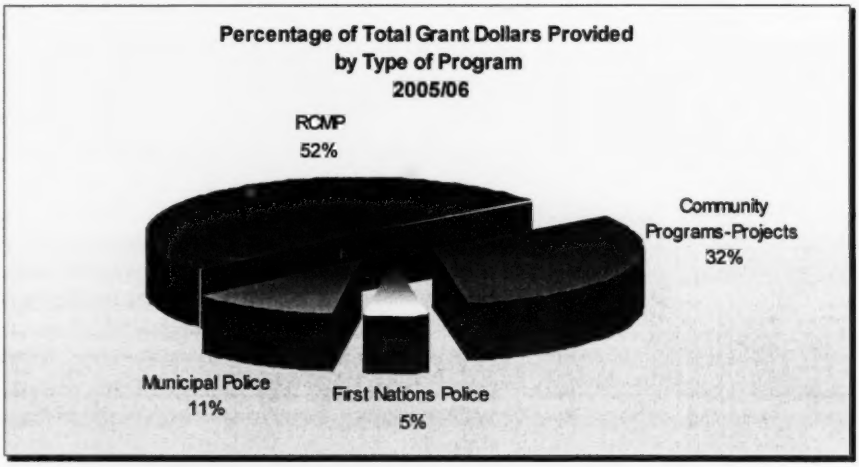
Of the programs that received funding, in 2005/06, 59 were provided grants for a one year term or received the first installment of a multi-year grant for a total of $2,473,426. The remaining 30 programs were awarded multi-year funding in either 2002/03, 2003/2004 or 2004/2005 and received their second or third year installments for a total of $1,165,199 for the 2005/06 year.

Police –based Programs

In 2005/06 grants to police-based victim service programs accounted for 68%, or $2,458,473, of the total grant funding. Of that amount, 78%, or $1,908,473 was granted to RCMP victim services. Municipal police victim services received 16%, or $365,000, while the remaining 6%, or $165,000, was awarded to First Nations police victim services programs.

Although police-based programs receive funding priority, community programs that provide services to victims of crime are also funded. Community programs were allocated 32% of the total grants provided *(Figure 2)*.

Figure 2



A network of police-based victim assistance programs now provide services for victims in 97% of the province. As of March 31, 2006, there were 74 police-based victims programs operating a total of 114 victims service units in Alberta.

Services provided to victims include intervention and support, information about their case and criminal justice proceedings, information about medical, legal and social services that can help, referrals to other community agencies, and court room orientation and accompaniment. These programs also provide victims of crime with information about completing victim impact statements, requesting restitution, and applying for financial benefits. Police-based programs provide a continuum of services to victims from the time of first response by police to the disposition of the case by the Courts. Services are provided in accordance with provincial guidelines.

Police-based Programs

The following grants were provided for police-based programs in 2005/06:

Grants shown in the following lists that are less than $8,000 were awarded prior to the minimum amount increase implemented in 2004/2005, or were increases to previously approved grants.

Athabasca Regional Victim Services Society	***$29,000***
Barrhead Community Victim Services Unit Association	***$11,500***
Battle River Victim Assistance Society	***$30,000***
Beaverlodge RCMP Victims Assistance Association	***$15,000***
Big Country Victims Services Association	***$50,000***
Blood Tribe Victim Services Unit	***$95,000***
Bow Island-Foremost Victim Assistance Association	***$8,000***
Brooks and District Victims Assistance Association	***$32,118***
Calgary Police Service Victim Assistance Unit	***$100,000***
Camrose and District Victim Services Society	***$45,000***
Cardium Region Victim Services Unit Society	***$40,000***
Cochrane and Area Victims Services Society	***$60,000***
Cold Lake Victim Services Society	***$22,541***
Edmonton Police Service Victim Assistance Unit	***$100,000***
Edson and District Victim Services Society	***$24,000***
Fairview Victims Assistance Association	***$14,415***
Fort Macleod and District Victim Services Association	***$15,000***
Fort McMurray Victim Services Society	***$100,000***
Fox Creek RCMP Victim Service Unit	***$8,000***
Grande Prairie and District RCMP Victims' Assistance Program Association	***$92,935***
Innisfail RCMP Victim Service Unit	***$10,448***
Leduc and District Victim Assistance Society	***$50,000***
Lesser Slave Lake Regional Police Service	***$70,000***
Lethbridge Detachment Victim Assistance Society	***$16,000***
Mackenzie Regional Community Policing Society	***$52,000***
Medicine Hat Police Service Victim Assistance Unit	***$70,000***
Peace Regional Victim Services Society	***$55,000***
Ponoka Victims Services Association	***$25,000***
Ranchlands Victims Services Society	***$65,000***
Red Deer City RCMP Victim Services	***$85,000***
Red Deer Rural Victim Assistance Society	***$11,300***
Rimbey and District Victim Services Society	***$12,000***
St. Paul and Area Victim Services Society	***$60,000***
Strathmore Regional Victim Services Society	***$35,500***
Sylvan Lake and District Victim Services Association	***$13,200***
Taber Crime and Abuse Prevention Society	***$15,700***
Three Hills Victim Services Association	***$8,000***
Victim Services Unit (Association)-Sturgeon Region	***$35,000***
Volunteer Programs Association-Fort Saskatchewan	***$29,730***

Police –based Programs

Vulcan Regional Victims Services Society	***$10,000***
Wabasca Regional Victim Services Society	***$40,000***
Westlock Community Victim Services Unit Association	***$24,488***
TOTAL	***$1,676,875***

Multi-Year Grants

In addition to grants listed above, Victims of Crime Fund grants also supported the following police-based programs. The amounts listed below were awarded multi-year grants in 2002/2003, 2003/2004 or 2004/2005:

Airdrie and District Victims Assistance Society	***$25,000***
Bashaw RCMP Victim Assistance Society	***$13,960***
Bonnyville Victim Services Society	***$25,000***
Bow Valley Victim Services Association	***$35,000***
Chinook Arch Victims Services Society	***$35,000***
Crisis Association of Vegreville	***$15,000***
Foothills Regional Victim Services Association	***$60,929***
Grande Cache Victim Services Society	***$15,000***
High Level Community Policing Society	***$45,050***
High Prairie and District RCMP Victims Assistance Society	***$55,000***
Highway 43 RCMP Victims Services Unit	***$40,000***
Hinton District Victim Services Society	***$29,000***
Lac La Biche Society, Victim Services Unit	***$60,000***
Lacombe Victim Services Association	***$15,000***
Lethbridge Regional Police Service Victim/Witness Services	***$100,000***
Midwest Victim Services	***$15,000***
Redcliff Victim Service Unit Association	***$8,000***
Rocky and District Victim Services Unit Association	***$40,076***
Slave Lake Victim Services Society	***$30,000***
St. Albert Victim Service Association	***$30,000***
Tofield and Area Victim Services Association	***$18,000***
Two Hills and Area Victim Services Society	***$13,000***
Wetaskiwin and District Victim Services Society	***$58,583***
Total	***$781,598***

Total Grants Provided to Police-Based Programs in 2005/2006 ***$2,458,473***

Community Programs

Community programs offer specialized services to victims of crime. Special projects including conferences, research, training and professional development may also be considered eligible for a grant.

Grants were provided to the following community groups in 2005/2006:

Alberta Police-based Victim Services Association (APBSA) ***$100,000***

The Alberta Police-based Victim Services Association consists of representation from victim service unit coordinators throughout the province. APBVSA received a grant to continue promoting professional development, mutual support, and information sharing with its membership to ensure service excellence to victims of crime.

ASSIST Community Services Centre ***$49,920***

ASSIST provides outreach services to Edmonton's Chinese/Asian community, as well as to newcomers. The Responding to Victims of Crime in the Chinese Community Program received a grant to provide outreach services to victims of family violence and to assist victims and witnesses with the criminal court process.

Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse (CCASA) ***$84,000***

CCASA's mission is to create an awareness of the many forms of sexual assault and sexual abuse and reduce the resulting trauma. The grant was awarded for the continuation of CCASA's Court Preparation Program which provides court preparation and support to victims of sexual abuse/assault in Calgary and surrounding areas.

Canadian Research Institute for Law and the Family (CRILF) ***$29,320***

The Canadian Research Institute for Law and the Family is an incorporated, charitable institute that undertakes multidisciplinary research, education, and publications on law and the family. The grant was provided for a research project titled: Victim Focused Services for the Elderly: Access and Effectiveness in Alberta.

Canadian Society for the Investigation of Child Abuse ***$50,000***

Since the program began in the Calgary region 12 years ago, over 2,000 victims and witnesses have been prepared for court through the Society's Child Witness Court Preparation Program. In 2005/06, the Program requested and received a grant increase to provide long distance court preparation services for child victims of crime through an e-learning approach, with computers in rural and isolated areas where such services and resources are not otherwise available.

Community Programs

Central Alberta Victims Assistance Society (CAVAS) ***$25,000***

CAVAS is an umbrella organization that works with 14 community member units in central Alberta (Rimbey, Innisfail, Ponoka, Camrose, Lacombe , Bashaw, Red Deer Rural, Stettler, Rocky Mountain House, Sylvan Lake, Wetaskiwin, Breton, Drayton Valley and Evansburg) The grant was awarded for training opportunities, professional development for advocates, board members and police liaisons, in addition to supporting costs associated with volunteer/Board appreciation initiatives, liability insurance, mileage and professional memberships.

Central Alberta Women's Emergency Shelter Society ***$40,700***

The Society received a grant for the Domestic Violence Court Case Coordination Project, whose purpose is to enhance the outcomes for victims by expediting domestic violence cases, supporting victims' participation and introducing early intervention/restorative justice options for offenders. The Project will facilitate effective investigation, prosecution and sentencing of family violence cases while taking victims' safety into account.

Community Initiatives Against Family Violence (CIAFV) ***$24,000***

CIAFV consists of 65 members from family violence community working groups in Edmonton, which represent 44 social service organizations. The grant was awarded for ongoing development of the Linking Protocols Project. Membership of the Protocols Working Group of CIAFV includes: YMCA; Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security; Correctional Services; Success by 6; The Support Network; Edmonton John Howard Society; Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired; Community Options; City of Edmonton Community Services; The Family Centre; Family Court and Mediation Services; Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton; Edmonton Family Violence Treatment, Education and Research Centre; and the Edmonton Police Service.

The grant monies will be used for ongoing development of the project - primarily the development of linking protocols among organizations, salaries, staff training, office supplies, honorariums for community participation (i.e. victim of violence who participates in the working group to provide a victims perspective), project evaluation, parking and mileage, and a portion of administrative costs.

Crisis Centre ***$44,000***

The Crisis Centre, Red Deer, provides services to victims of sexual assault and their families with immediate in-office crisis intervention/ education, court preparation, court accompaniment, hospital accompaniment (24 hours/day) and accompaniment to the RCMP to report the crime. The grant was awarded to continue to provide crisis intervention, accompaniment to the RCMP, court, hospital and court preparation accompaniment to victims of sexual assault in Red Deer and surrounding areas.

Community Programs

Family Law Office ***$100,000***

To better respond to family violence issues, the Family Law Office initiated the Edmonton Protection Order Program (EPOP) in 2004. EPOP provides front line information and support services for victims seeking Emergency Protection Orders. The grant was provided to continue the delivery of the Emergency Protection Order Program, as well as program operating costs, training and insurance.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD Canada) ***$50,000***

Mothers Against Drunk Driving supports victims of impaired drivers, works towards stopping impaired driving, conducts educational campaigns and has a toll-free victim support line. Funding was provided for the Death Notification Training program. The Program delivers compassionate death notification training to police, victim support workers and emergency support workers in Alberta.

Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative Ltd. (MCHB) ***$7,760***

The Multi-Cultural Health Brokers Co-operative is a workers' co-op composed of 18 members from eight immigrant and refugee communities in Edmonton. The Co-operative has developed handbooks explaining the rights and supports available to victims of crime in immigrant communities. The grant was provided to facilitate the design and printing of translations of the handbook, and to disseminate them to the target communities.

Providing Assistance, Counseling and Education (P.A.C.E) ***$28,000***

P.A.C.E, Grande Prairie, provides services to individuals and communities dealing with sexual assault/abuse in Northwestern Alberta. P.A.C.E also provides standardized crisis intervention training programs to community members/front line workers and volunteers. The grant was awarded to provide court preparation, support and accompaniment to victims of crime in their service area.

Project Lifeline ***$26,000***

Project Lifeline, Edmonton, is conducting research to identify systemic and perceived barriers that prevent women from seeking protection under the law; to document strategies for women to alleviate their risks of victimization; and, to develop Aboriginal cross-cultural training for law enforcement officers dealing with Aboriginal female victims that incorporate police perspectives. The research data will be directed toward educating Aboriginal women and law enforcement officers throughout Alberta about domestic violence.

Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton (S.A.C.E.) ***$67,158***

The Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton assists in empowering victims affected by sexual abuse and assault, as well as assists communities to take action against sexual abuse. The grant was provided to help fund SACE's Diversity Outreach Program, which provides culturally sensitive and language specific services to victims as well as workshops to ethnocultural communities.

Community Programs

Southern Alberta Regional Conference Committee ***$13,243***

Southern Alberta Regional Conference Committee provides advanced victim services training to volunteer victim advocates and program coordinators. The educational event also presents opportunities for volunteers and program coordinators to network and share their knowledge and skills with others working in the field of victim services and crisis intervention. The grant was provided to assist with costs associated with organizing and hosting the conference for southern Alberta victims service units' front-line volunteers and program coordinators.

Tsuu T'ina Nation Band-Stoney Corrections Society ***$57,450***

The Tsuu T'ina Nation Band-Stoney Corrections Society provides victim services for Tsuu T'ina and the three Bands of the Stoney Tribes: Bearspaw, Chiniki and Wesley. The Society provides intervention, referrals, court orientation and support, information about victim impact statements, restitution, financial benefits, as well as information on family violence and assault/sexual assault. The grant was provided to enable the unit to become a fully established victim services program.

Total ***$796,551***

The Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women (IAAW) ***$26,400****

The Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women was formed in 1995 in response to the need for an inclusive organization to honour Aboriginal women's achievements and to advocate for their human rights. Since then, the IAAW has been working toward increasing public awareness of Aboriginal womens' issues. The grant was awarded to implement the Crimes Against Aboriginal Women Project (CAAW) which included data gathering, analysis, and publication and distribution of a brochure for Aboriginal women.

Victims of Crime Fund Grants also supported the following community programs which received multi-year grants in either 2002/2003, 2003/2004, or 2004/2005:

Canadian Society for the Investigation of Child Abuse ***$50,000***
Calgary Legal Guidance ***$50,000***
Edmonton John Howard Society Victim's Assistance Program ***$100,000***
Lloydminster Sexual Assault & Information Centre (LSAIC) ***$20,000***

* This grant was awarded in 2004/2005.

Community Programs

Partner Support Program	$49,826
Strathcona Sexual Assault Centre	$13,775
Zebra Child Protection Society	$100,000
Total	$383,601
Total Grants Approved or Provided to Community Programs in 2005/2006	$1,180,152
Total Grants Provided in 2005/2006	$3,638,625

PROGRAM ACTIVITY

Introduction

Information on the activities of victim services programs was collected using the Quarterly Report Form. The Report collects information on the number of new cases, the number of persons assisted, and the type of assistance provided. For each of these variables, the Report categorizes assistance provided as either *Criminal Code – Violent* (e.g. homicide, violent sex offences, serious assaults, etc.), *Criminal Code – Non-violent* (e.g. forgery, fraud, theft, etc.), *Offence Non-criminal* (offences that do not fall within the *Criminal Code of Canada*, i.e., Provincial Statute Offences) or *Assistance – No offence* (e.g. sudden death, notifying next-of-kin, motor vehicle collisions, suicide, etc.).

As of April 2005, the Report quantifies the number of victim impact statements distributed to victims of crime and the number of Victim Impact Statement Notification forms that have been completed and forwarded to the Court and Crown prosecutor offices, and the number of Requests for Restitution completed and forwarded to Crown prosecutor offices. Volunteer statistics collected include the number of advocates, the hours contributed, the type of activities performed and staffing information.

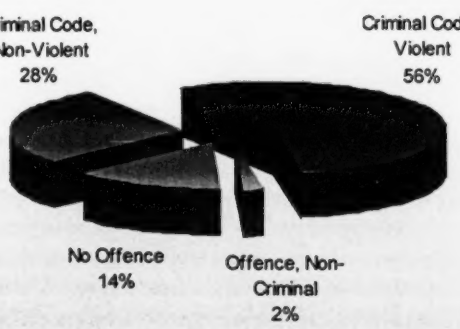
The Report also collects statistics on victim referrals to victim service units, whether from police or other sources.

New Cases

Victim service programs reported dealing with 34,907 new cases during the 2005/06 fiscal year. This number was a 3% increase compared to 2004/05.

Figure 3

New Cases by Types of Offences 2005/2006



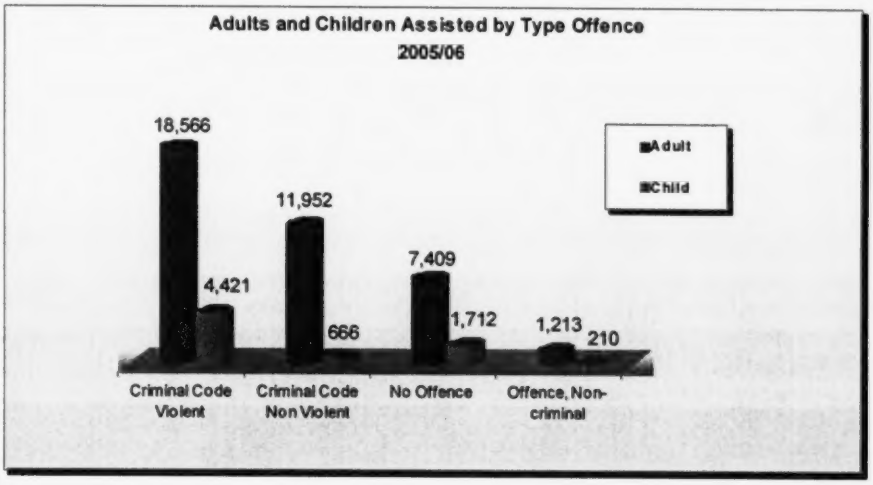
Program Activity

New cases refer only to those cases (files) opened during the reporting period. A case may involve one or more victims, as well as family members or friends affected by an incident of crime. Of the 34,907 new cases, slightly more than half (56%) involved assisting victims of *Criminal Code-Violent* offences (*Figure 3*). Assistance was least often provided when the offence was *Non-Criminal,* or 2% of new cases.

Persons Assisted

Programs reported providing assistance to 46,149 people, a 3% increase compared to 2004/05. Of persons assisted in the 2005/06 fiscal year, 39,140 (85%) were adults and 7,009 (15%) were children. Half of the people assisted were victims of a *Criminal Code – Violent* offence, while 27% of people assisted were victims of *Criminal Code – Non-violent* offences *(Figure 4).*

Figure 4



Compared to 2004/05, there was an 8% increase in persons assisted who were victims of a *Criminal Code–Violent* offence, and a 3% decrease in persons assisted in relation to an *Offence Non-criminal.* There was also a 3% decrease in persons assisted in the *No Offence* category and a less than 1% increase in persons assisted who were victims of a *Criminal Code-Non-Violent* offence The difference between persons assisted in relation to a *Criminal Code Non-Violent* offenses was negligible.

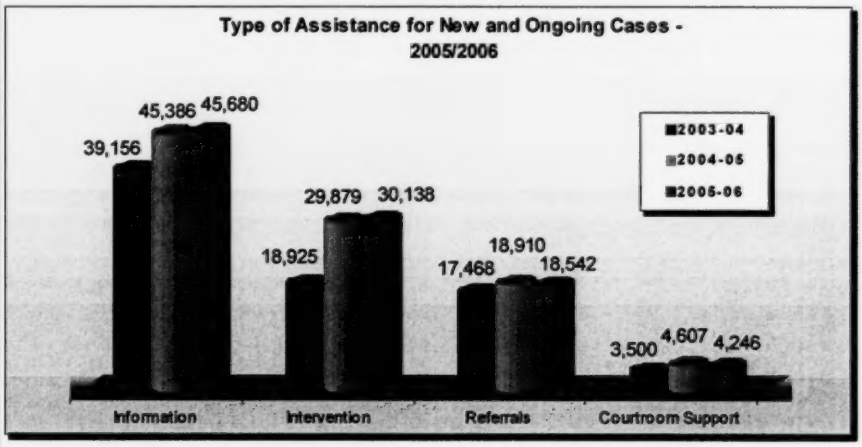
Type of Assistance

Providing information was the type of assistance most frequently provided for new and ongoing cases (45,680), which was virtually unchanged from 2004/05 (Figure 5). The *Intervention* category, which includes crisis response, notification of next of kin, or practical assistance at a crime scene, was the second most common type of assistance provided (30,138 cases) and was also unchanged from 2004/05. *Referrals to other Agencies (*18,542 cases) was the next highest category, with a 2% decrease compared to 2004/05.

Program Activity

Court Room support was provided in a small number of cases (4,246) in relation to the other categories in 2005/06. In terms of category of offence, assistance was provided most often when the incident/offence involved was in the *Violent Criminal Code* category.

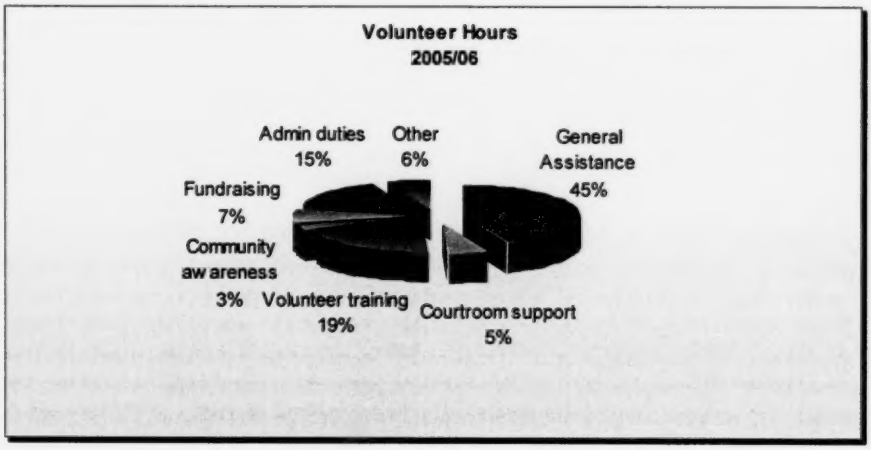
Figure 5



Volunteers

The dedication of volunteers is vital to the success of the Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security mandate to ensure that victims of crime have timely access to information and services while they are involved in the criminal justice system. Volunteers donate their time in differing capacities to either police-based or community victim service programs.

Figure 6



In 2005/06, providing general assistance (information, intervention and referrals) to victims accounted for 45% of volunteer time. Nineteen percent of volunteer hours were dedicated to volunteer training, followed by administrative duties, at 15%.

Volunteers

The remaining hours were spent on fundraising (7%), other activities such as meetings and travel time (6%), court room support (5%), and raising community awareness (3%) (Figure 6).

The distribution of volunteer hours between these categories did not vary to any significant degree from the previous year.

The number of volunteer hours has decreased by 5% in relation to 2004/05, while the number of volunteers has increased from 1,687 to 1,925, an increase of 14%. Approximately 51 full-time and 59 part-time paid staff were employed by all programs.

ALBERTA SOLICITOR GENERAL AND PUBLIC SECURITY INITIATIVES

Victim Impact Statement Program

The Victim Impact Statement Program provides victims in Alberta with the opportunity to have input into sentencing by describing in writing, to the Court, how they have been affected by the crime.

Police notify all victims of crime of this opportunity and provide information about the nearest victim service unit, where the Victim Impact Statement Form and information about completing it can be obtained.

Victims have the option of reading their statements aloud in court. If the victim has chosen to do so, the police or victim services notify the victim of the court dates for sentencing. Prior to sentencing, the Court is required to inquire if the victim has been advised of the opportunity to prepare a statement, and may adjourn proceedings to permit the victim to prepare a statement.

As a result of case law decisions in Alberta, Victim Impact Statement guidelines were revised and the following changes were implemented in 2004/05:

- Statements are now sent directly to the Clerk of the Court and the Crown prosecutor, after a charge is laid; and,

- Victim service programs now complete a Victim Impact Statement Court Notification form, which notifies the Clerk of the Court and the Crown prosecutor that a victim in a specific case wishes to complete a Victim Impact Statement. When the victim files their VIS with the Court, the Clerk of the Court keeps the Statement on file until a conviction is entered, at which time it is given to the presiding Judge.

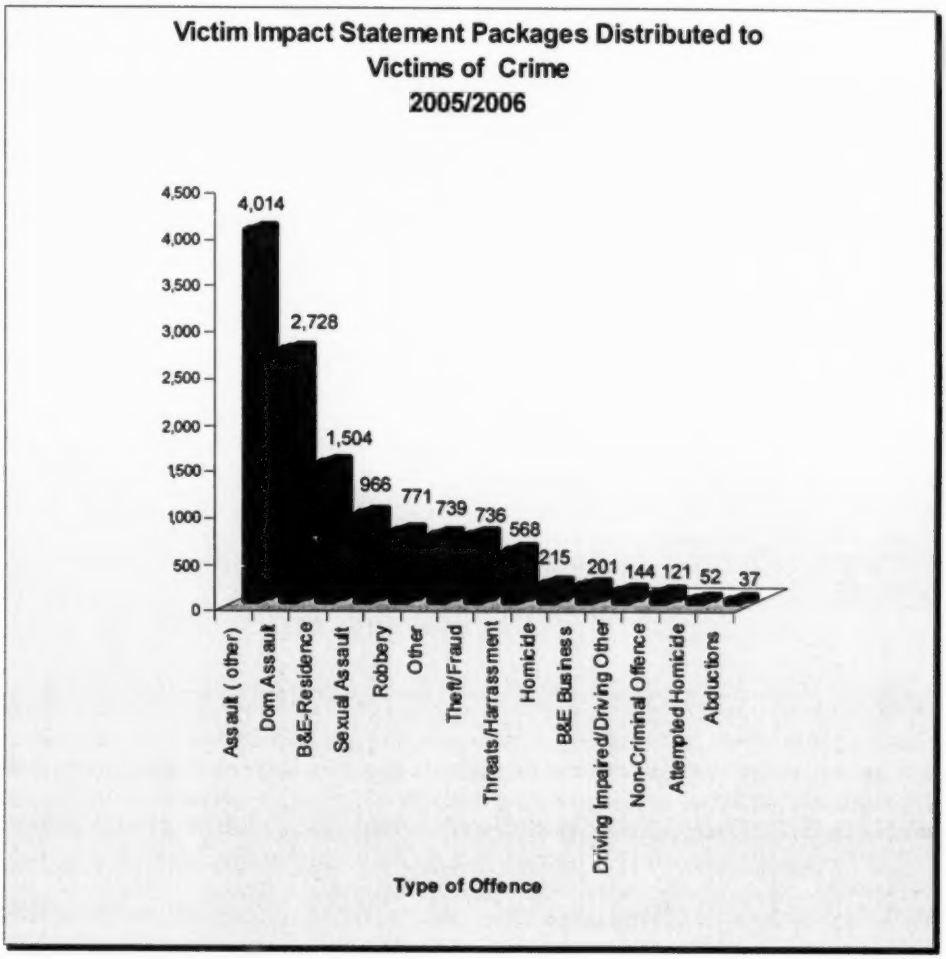
As a result, in April 1, 2005, victim service programs began reporting the number of Victim Impact Statement packages they distributed to victims, and the number of Victim Impact Statement Notification forms forwarded to the Clerk of the Court and the Crown Prosecutor's Office.

In fiscal year 2005/06, programs reported distributing 12,796 Victim Impact Statement packages to crime victims in Alberta (Figure 7). Victim service programs competed 5,400 Notification forms and forwarded them to the Clerk of the Court and Crown Prosecutors' Offices, after charges had been laid.

Victims Impact Statement Program

Victim Impact Statement packages were most often distributed by victim service programs in relation to common assault, at 4,014, followed by domestic assault (2,728) and break and enter—residence (1,504).

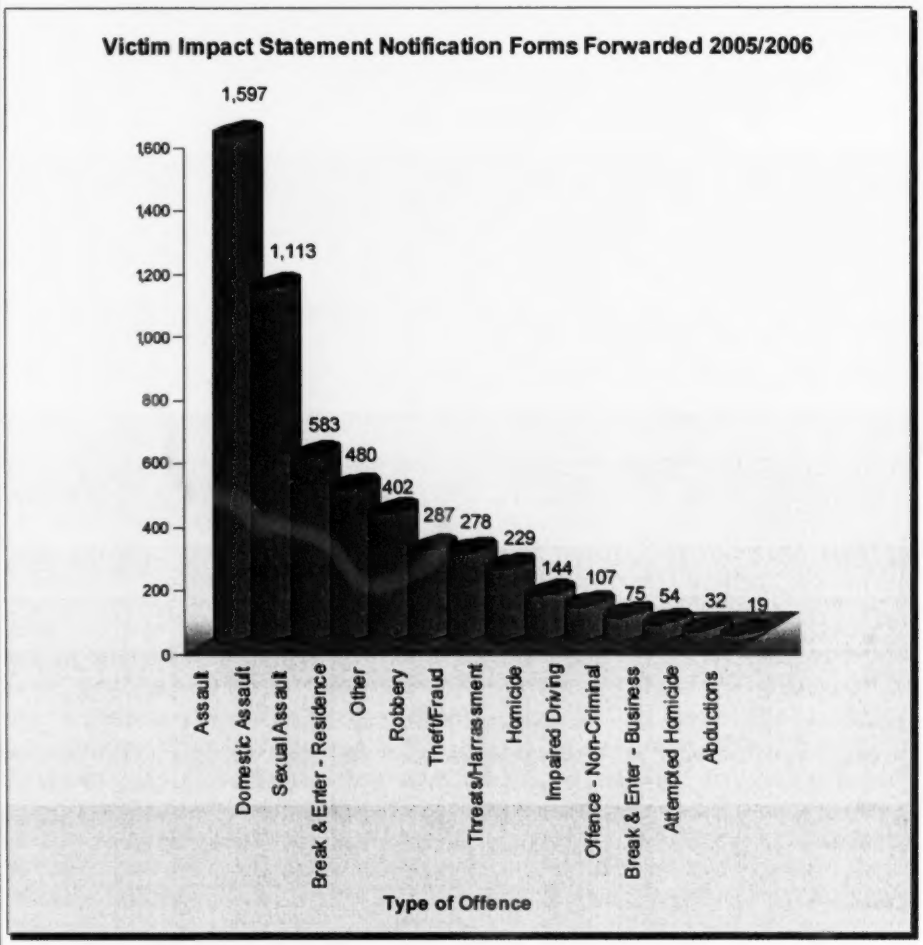
Figure 7



Victim Impact Statement Program

The three categories of offence in which the most Victim Impact Statement Notification Forms forwarded were *common assault* (1,597), *domestic assault* (1,113) and *sexual assault* (583). The least number were forwarded in cases of break and enter - business (54), attempted homocide (32) and abductions (19) (Figure 8).

Figure 8

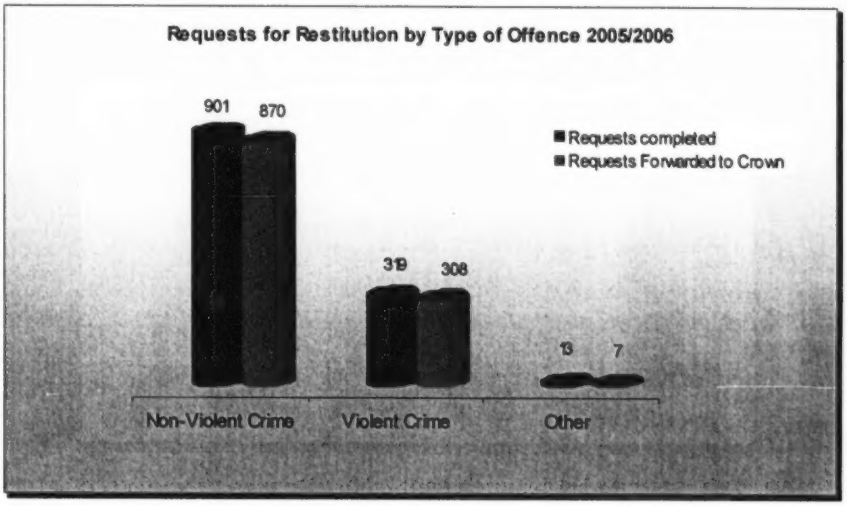


Due to the changes in the Victim Impact Statement Program procedures, comparisons to 2005/2005 fiscal year cannot be made in terms of the number of Statements forwarded to the Court or Crown.

Requesting Restitution

The Requesting Restitution Program provides victims of crime who have suffered a financial loss with information about how they can request that the offender pay restitution. A crime victim may complete a Request for Restitution Form provided by the police officer investigating the case or a victim support worker. Once the form is completed, the victim returns it to police, who then forward it to the Crown prosecutor. The Crown Prosecutor may make the application for restitution to the Court, or may decline to do so. If the Crown declines, the victim may request the Court to do so on its own motion.

Figure 9



Restitution may be ordered for damage, destruction and loss of property, bodily harm, expenses incurred in moving out of the offender's house, as in spousal abuse cases, or for losses incurred by unknowingly purchasing or lending money on stolen property.

For the 2005/2006 year, 1,233 Requests for Restitution were completed and returned to police and of these, 1,185 were forwarded to the Crown after charges were laid. These figures represent a decrease of 24% and 21%, respectively, from the last fiscal year. The majority of the Requests for Restitution completed and returned to police, and forwarded to the Crown, concerned *Non-Violent Crime*. The next largest category was *Violent Crime* followed by *Other (Figure 9)*.

Victim Assistance Coordinator Training

In 2005/06, 47 participants attended Victim Assistance Coordinators' Training held February 27th to March 3rd, 2006. Several training sessions were delivered to participants including victim service unit program coordinators, victim advocates, police members, Court Services staff, Crown Prosecutors and Criminal Justice staff, Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security staff, Department of National Defense staff, and Aboriginal representatives.

The training provides information about the criminal justice system, federal and provincial legislation concerning victims of crime, and information about related programs assisting victims in Alberta.

Brochures

A series of brochures designed to increase awareness of programs available to victims of crime and to provide specific information on victim impact statements, restitution and financial benefits was distributed to police services, victim services units and other agencies that provide assistance to victims of crime. Copies of brochures may be obtained at: **http://www.dbf.com/mktg/acsc/request_ext.asp**

Quarterly Report Form

Victim service programs complete the Victim Services Quarterly Report Form. This statistical collection form provides Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security with information about services provided to victims and acts as a measure of accountability for grant monies awarded. The Quarterly Report has standardized the reporting process and improved the quality of information collected about services provided to victims in Alberta.

Victim Advocate Training Manual

Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security distributed the *Victim Advocate Training Manual* to victim service units throughout Alberta. The Manual establishes a provincial standard for Victim Advocate training, and creates an opportunity for Victim Advocates to become certified. In 2005/06, 82 victim services advocates and two program coordinators received certification from the Justice/Solicitor General and Public Security Staff College.

Victims of Crime Website

The Victims of Crime section of the website contains a wide range of information on victims' programs and services in Alberta including:

- Help for Victims of Crime;
- Financial Benefits Program;
- Victim Program Grants;
- Requesting Restitution; and
- Contact information for Victim Service Units, Community Programs, and the Victims Services Branch, Solicitor General and Public Security.

The website address is: **www.victims.gov.ab.ca**

Public Awareness Campaign

In March and April 2006, Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security launched a province-wide victim services awareness campaign. The campaign consisted of three radio announcements, interior transit advertisements, rest-o-bar advertisements, in restaurants and licensed establishments and a series of six posters that were distributed to victim assistance programs throughout the province. The campaign responds to recommendations from the *Report of the Alberta Victims of Crime Consultation.* The Report and all campaign materials can be downloaded from **www.victims.gov.ab.ca**

The campaign utilized the tagline "Victims deserve to be heard" as a reminder that victims do indeed have a voice and a role in the criminal justice system. This is expected to be an ongoing and expanding campaign that will continue.

Grant Review Survey

In November 2005, victim assistance programs were surveyed to obtain their perspectives on the Victims of Crime Fund grant allocation process, and offer recommendations for changes. The results of this survey have been compiled and presented to the Minister.

Contact Information

CONTACT US

For additional information, contact
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Phone: (780) 427-3460 (local calls) or
310-0000 (toll-free within Alberta) or through our web-site at::
www.gov.ab.ca

ALBERTA POLICE BASED VICTIM SERVICE UNITS 2005/06

Note: This map is a visual representation of Victim Service Units in Alberta and is not intended to be geographically accurate